

HERITAGE NETWORK

Beauchamps Cottage, Wyddial, SG9 0EP

HN1564

HERITAGE STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared at the request of Rob Forsyth, to support an application for planning and listed building consent for the replacement of the cottage and adjacent barn located at Beauchamps, Wyddial, SG9 0EP (Figure 1). A previous Heritage Advice Note has established that the present building benefits from curtilage listing derived from the nearby 17th century farmhouse (Heritage Collective, n.d.). Accordingly, in line with Paragraph 189 of the revised *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2019), the Heritage Statement is intended to advise East Hertfordshire District Council (EHDC) regarding the significance of the existing building and the impacts on the character, and hence the significance, of the listed farmhouse arising from the proposed works.

The Heritage Network is an independent practice specialising in archaeology and the historic environment. Founded in 1992, the company has undertaken a wide variety of commercial projects for clients involved in housing and industrial development, pipeline and road construction, agriculture and landscaping. As a Registered Organisation, the company is monitored annually by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) to ensure that its work meets the highest professional standards.

The present project has been undertaken by David Hillelson BA MCIfA, the Heritage Network's Managing Director. He holds an honours degree in archaeology from the University of Durham and has extensive experience of the management of heritage projects, and of fieldwork in both urban and rural contexts. He has been the practice's principal officer since 1992 and specialises in the recording of historic buildings.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The 1842 Tithe map for the parish of Layston shows a triangular farmyard located to the south-east of the farmhouse, bounded by three ranges of buildings. The western range runs perpendicular to the axis of the farmhouse and is formed of a number of distinct structures. Careful overlaying of modern mapping over the Tithe map shows that the present structure occupies a similar footprint to the principal building in this range (Figure 2).

The more accurately surveyed first edition 25-inch Ordnance Survey map of 1877 demonstrates that the earlier triangular farmyard had been partially demolished, and a new farmyard established directly opposite the frontage of the farmhouse. The western range of the former farmyard has been retained, however, and forms the eastern range of the new farmyard. The present structure can now be seen to have a narrower and shorter footprint than its predecessor (Figure 3).

By 1898, the date of the second edition 25-inch Ordnance Survey map, the footprints have become aligned, indicating a rebuild or replacement of the earlier barn (Figure 4). A comparison between the 1891 and 1901 Census returns shows that the property changed occupants in the intervening years, and the 1901 Census also indicates a second household at Beauchamps, which is likely to have occupied Beauchamps Cottage. The eastern extension to the cottage is first shown on large scale Ordnance Survey mapping in 1976.

BUILDING DESCRIPTION

An inspection of the building was carried out 23 October 2020.

Exterior

The building forms a timber-framed barn of five bays aligned north-south with two further bays to the south forming part of the same structure but built as domestic accommodation (Plate 1). It sits on a brick plinth with the framing clad on the exterior with modern softwood weatherboarding. Modern double doors in the middle of the eastern elevation of the barn give access to the interior and a further set of modern double doors have been inserted in the northern elevation. An opening in the middle of the western elevation has been blocked, although pintles for the earlier doors survive in the jambs (Plate 2).

The domestic end of the building is entered through a door on the eastern side of the original southern elevation, now protected by a modern porch (Plate 3). Two windows sit to the west of the doorway, each window being a two-light casement, and each light being of two panes. An extension, housing kitchen and bathroom, has been added to the east of the doorway, beneath a catslide continuation of the main roof of the building. Two windows, serving the first floor, are aligned with the ground floor windows.

The barn is roofed in corrugated iron sheeting, and the cottage in clay tile (Plate 4). A partially rendered brick double chimney, with a T-shaped plan, rises through the roof to the west of the ridge of the cottage.

Interior

The framing throughout the barn is formed of a sawn softwood wall-plate, supported by principal posts with diagonal primary bracing, resting on a sawn softwood sole-plate and infilled with sawn softwood studs (Plate 5). The roof structure is formed of king post trusses, with sloping queen struts, resting on the wall-plate and braced to the principal posts. The trusses support four purlins in each slope within the main area of the barn, increasing to eight purlins in each slope supporting boarding, at the point that the roof transitions from corrugated sheeting to tile (Plate 6).

Bay 3 (from the north) has double door openings in the E and W elevations (Plates 7 & 8). The doorways are flanked by principal posts, which extend to the ground and could be from the earlier structure or reused from elsewhere. They are of quite narrow scantling.

A small area of early framing survives in the NE corner of the barn and hints at an earlier building (Plate 9). A section of sole plate and mid-rail survive together with the truncated corner post indicating a much taller structure of uncertain date.

The braces between the tie-beams and principal posts also appear to be of earlier date, and could be derived from the earlier structure on the site or reused from elsewhere. A variety of carpenter's marks confirm reuse, particularly clearly demonstrated at the lower end of the brace on the west side of Bay 2/3, which includes both a III and a VIII (Plate 10).

The partition between the barn and the dwelling, visible where the weatherboarding has been removed, is contemporary with the other softwood framing in the barn (Plate 11). A doorway from the cottage to the barn has been closed with modern bricks.

The dwelling is divided into two rooms on the ground floor, plus a kitchen and bathroom housed in the modern eastern extension, and two rooms on the first floor.

- The eastern ground floor room retains little of historic detail, though a wide fireplace opening in the west elevation hints at a former range (Plate 12), and an original boarded and ledged door at the north end of the east elevation opens onto the staircase leading to the first floor (Plate 13). No coving exists and the skirting is plain throughout.
- The partition between the eastern and western rooms, to the south of the chimney, has been removed (Plate 14). The chimney breast in the east elevation of the western room has a modern ventilation grill indicating a blocked fireplace, and a short length of beam is exposed in the alcove to the north of the chimney.
- The staircase rises directly into the eastern first floor room, which has little of historic detail other than the double chimney breast in the west elevation (Plate 15). A surviving partition to the south, which retains an original boarded and ledged door, leads into the western room.
- The ceiling in the western room follows the roofline and a chimney breast occupies the east elevation (Plate 16). A fireplace sits at the northern end of this, with a small cast iron grate with fleur-de-lys decoration on the backplate (Plate 17).
- Discoloured patches on and adjacent to the chimney breasts in the upper rooms, suggest extensive hygroscopic salt contamination in the masonry of the chimney due to the burning of fossil fuels.

SIGNIFICANCE

Beauchamps farmhouse is a designated heritage asset, being a building listed as Grade II under the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. The present building is considered to benefit from protection under the act, as forming part of the curtilage of the farmhouse and contributing to its setting.

The significance of a heritage asset may be considered in terms of its *aesthetic, evidential, historical, or communal* values (English Heritage *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance*).

- Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
- Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
- Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.
- Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

The significance of Beauchamps farmhouse is derived principally from its evidential and historical values, in terms of its 17th century construction at the heart of a medieval moated manorial site. Consideration should also be given to the aesthetic value of the house, as an attractive example of much altered post-medieval farmhouse in a traditional rural setting. As a Grade II listed building, using standard criteria for determining effect significance (see Appendix), its significance may be considered to be *Medium*.

Beauchamps Cottage and barn may be classified as heritage assets but are unexceptional, demonstrating a standard functional design typical of the late 19th century. Minor evidential value may be derived from the surviving fabric of an earlier structure in the north-east corner of the barn, the re-used braces, and the posts flanking the eastern and western door-openings. Nevertheless, it would neither meet the criteria for national nor local listing in its own right and thus, as a building of little

historical or architectural merit, using standard criteria (see Appendix), its significance may be considered to be *Negligible*.

PROPOSED WORKS

The works propose the demolition of the existing cottage and barn and their replacement with a sympathetically designed dwelling on the same footprint.

The potential impact of the proposed development on the significance of Beauchamps farmhouse is indirect and focused on the change to its setting.

DISCUSSION

Beauchamps Cottage and barn were built in the late 19th century, probably between 1891 and 1898. The cottage is integral to the barn and was probably built by the farmer to house a farm worker. The building as a whole is cheaply constructed in an unexceptional form, but the barn does make use of a number of salvaged timbers from another building, and also preserves a small area of truncated early framing in the north-east corner. Although curtilage listed, the building has been demonstrated to be of *Negligible* significance. Following standard criteria (see Appendix), demolition of the building would represent a *Major* impact, leading to a *Negligible* 'significance of effect'.

Demolition of the building would noticeably change the setting of Beauchamps farmhouse which, following standard criteria (see Appendix), represents a *Minor* indirect impact, leading to a *Moderate* to *Minor Negative* 'significance of effect'.

The replacement of the cottage and barn with a sympathetically designed building on the same footprint, possibly incorporating the historic elements noted in the existing structure, would mitigate the impact of the loss of the existing building and modify the 'significance of effect' from *Moderate/Minor Negative* to *Negligible*.

CONCLUSION

Beauchamps Cottage and barn are considered to be unexceptional and of *Negligible* heritage significance. The proposed replacement of the building with a sympathetically designed dwelling on the same footprint, would reduce the defined indirect *Moderate* to *Minor Negative* impact on the significance of the Grade II listed Beauchamps farmhouse to *Negligible*.

In the context of paragraph 196 of the NPPF, the demolition of the barn would represent a less than substantial harm to the significance of Beauchamps farmhouse, which could be effectively mitigated by its replacement with a building of similar form and mass on the same footprint, reusing earlier materials, where possible.

In the context of paragraph 199 of the NPPF, recording of the building before demolition (to Historic England Level 2) would be desirable and would ensure that evidence of its past form was preserved and made publically accessible.

ILLUSTRATIONS

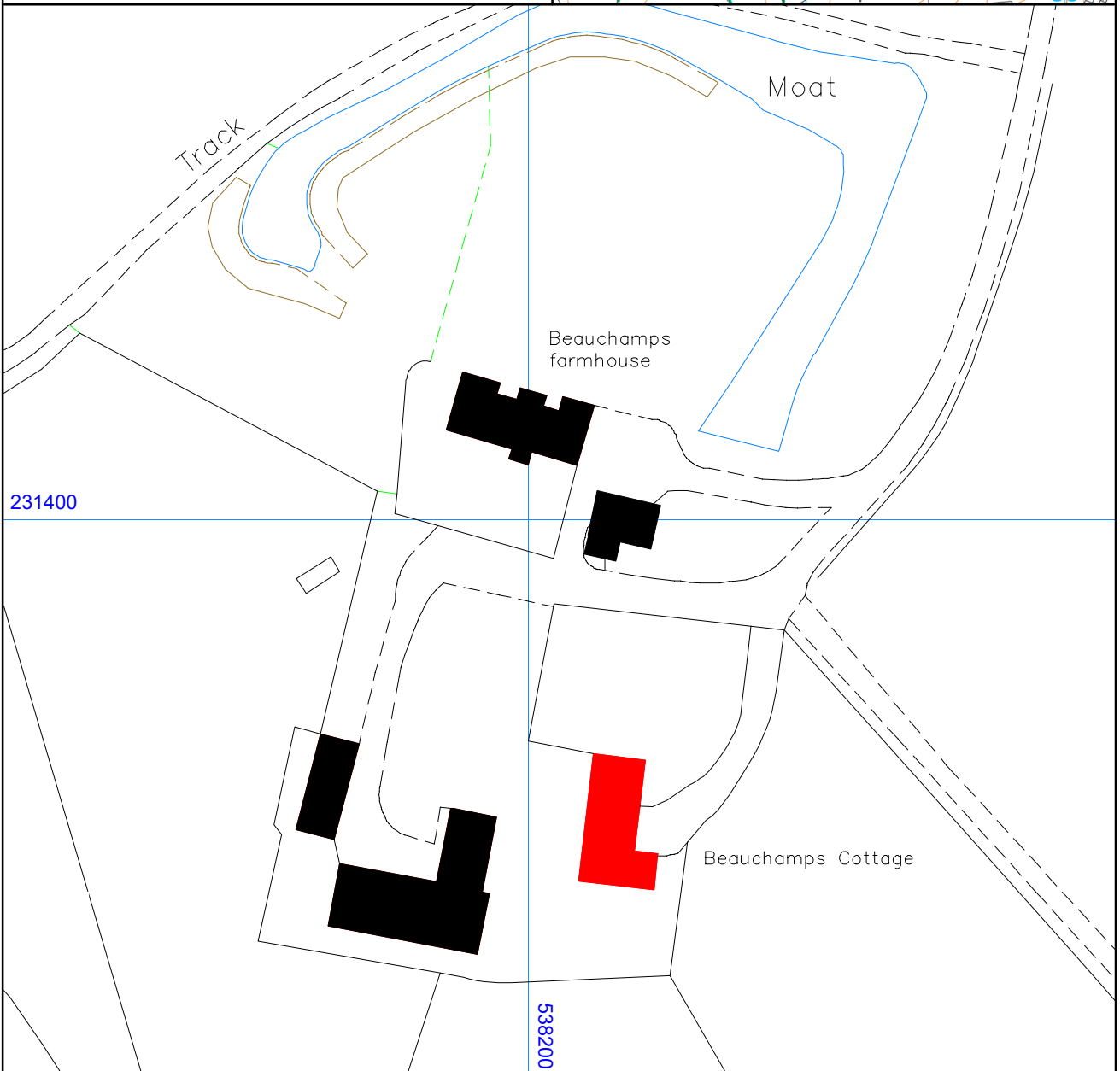
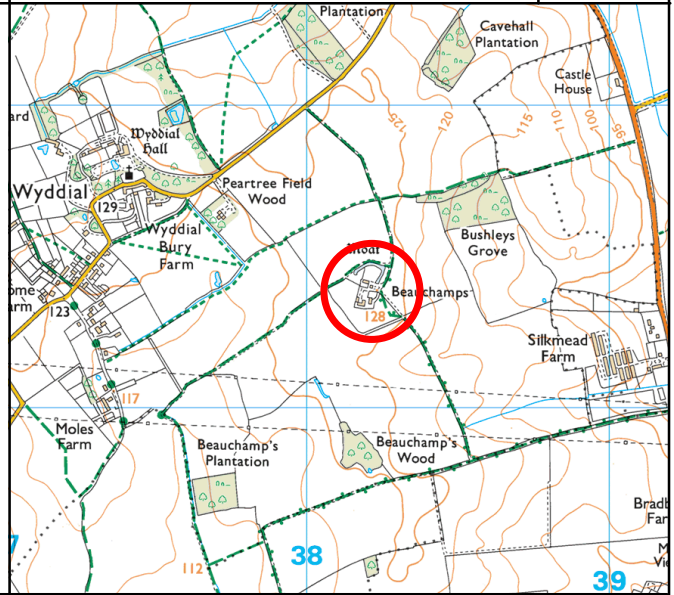
| | |
|----------------|--|
| Figure 1 | Site location |
| Figure 2 | Extract from Tithe Map, 1842 |
| Figure 3 | Extract from Ordnance Survey, 1877 |
| Figure 4 | Extract from Ordnance Survey, 1898 |
| | |
| Plate 1 | View of cottage and barn, looking SW |
| Plate 2 | Pintles in north jamb of blocked western doorway |
| Plate 3 | Southern exterior elevation of cottage, looking N |
| Plate 4 | Chimney and roof to cottage and barn, looking SE |
| Plate 5 | Interior of barn, looking N |
| Plate 6 | Roof structure at junction between barn and cottage, looking S |
| Plate 7 | Eastern barn door opening, looking E |
| Plate 8 | Western (blocked) barn door opening, looking W |
| Plate 9 | Early framing in NE corner of barn, looking NE |
| Plate 10 | Bay 2-3, western brace, looking NW |
| Plate 11 | Exposed framing and blocked door in S elevation, looking S |
| Plate 12 | Fireplace, E ground floor, looking WNW |
| Plate 13 | Stair and kitchen access, E ground floor, looking ENE |
| Plate 14 | Chimney and alcove, W ground floor, looking NE |
| Plate 15 | Double chimney breast in W elevation, E 1st floor, looking WNW |
| Plate 16 | East elevation, W 1st floor, looking NE |
| Plate 17 | Fleur-de-Lys detail on backplate, W 1st floor fireplace |

David Hillelson BA MCifA
05 November 2020

HERITAGE NETWORK

Beauchamps Cottage, Wyddial, Herts.

HN1564



Site Location

Scale 1:1000

(Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Licence no.100020449)

Figure 1

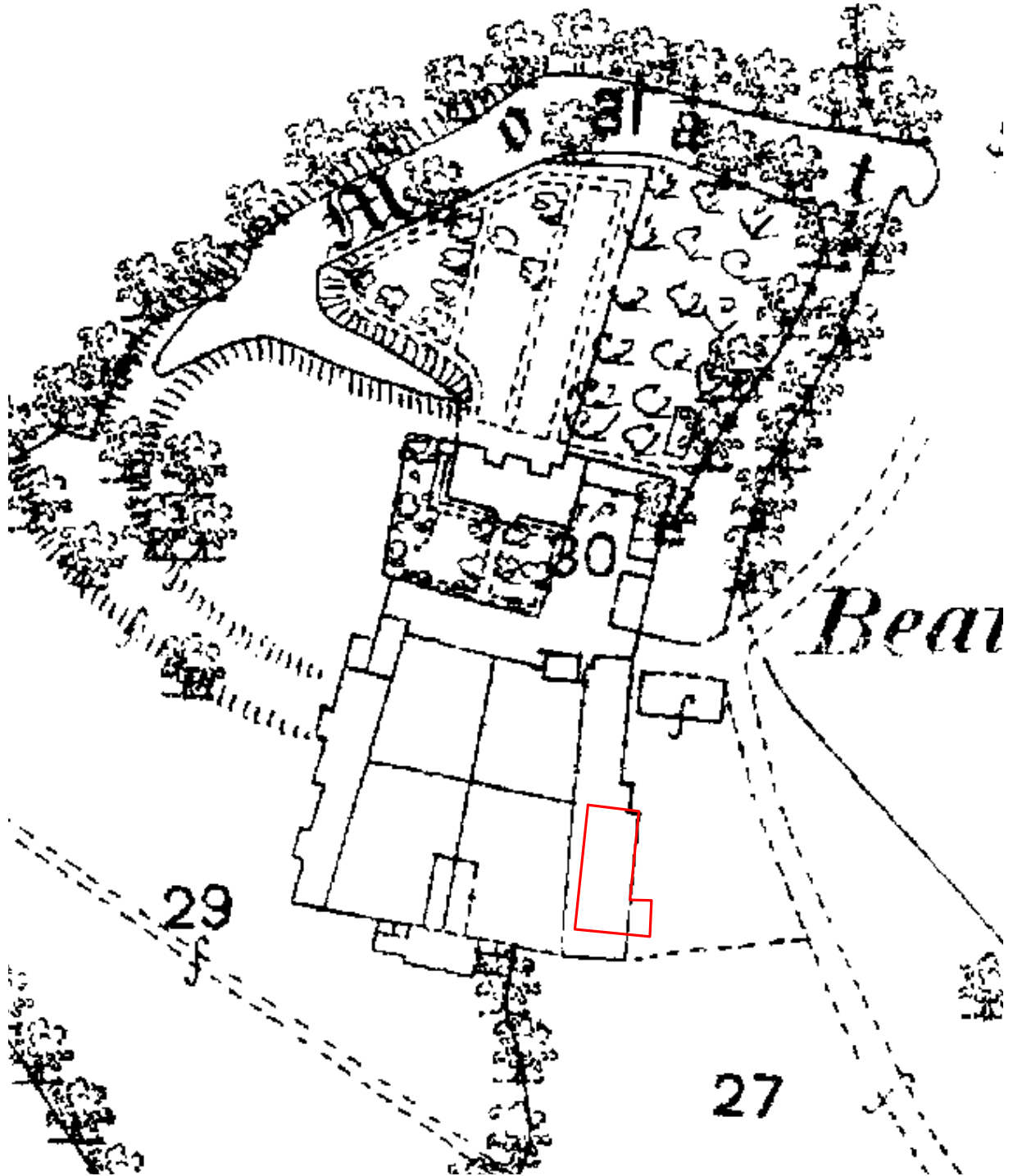


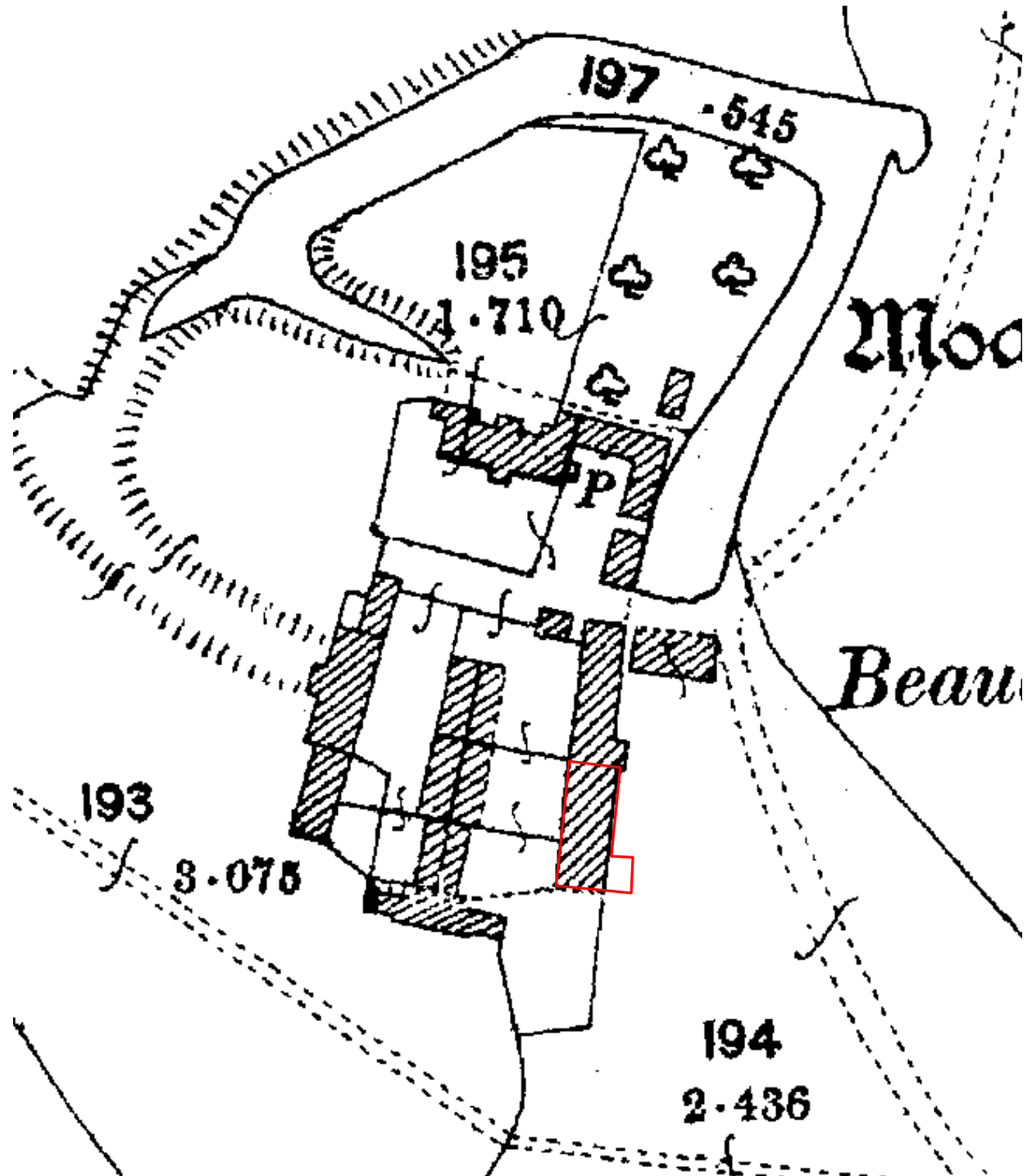
Extract from Tithe Map, 1842

HCRO ref. DSA4/65/2

Scale 1:1000

Figure 2





HN1564: Beauchamps Cottage, Wyddial



Plate 01 - View of cottage and barn, looking SW



Plate 02 - Pintles in north jamb of blocked western doorway

HN1564: Beauchamps Cottage, Wyddial



Plate 03 - Southern exterior elevation of cottage, looking N



Plate 04 - Chimney and roof to cottage and barn, looking SE

HN1564: Beauchamps Cottage, Wyddial



Plate 05 - Interior of barn, looking N



Plate 06 - Roof structure at junction between barn and cottage, looking S

HN1564: Beauchamps Cottage, Wyddial



Plate 07 - Eastern barn door opening, looking E

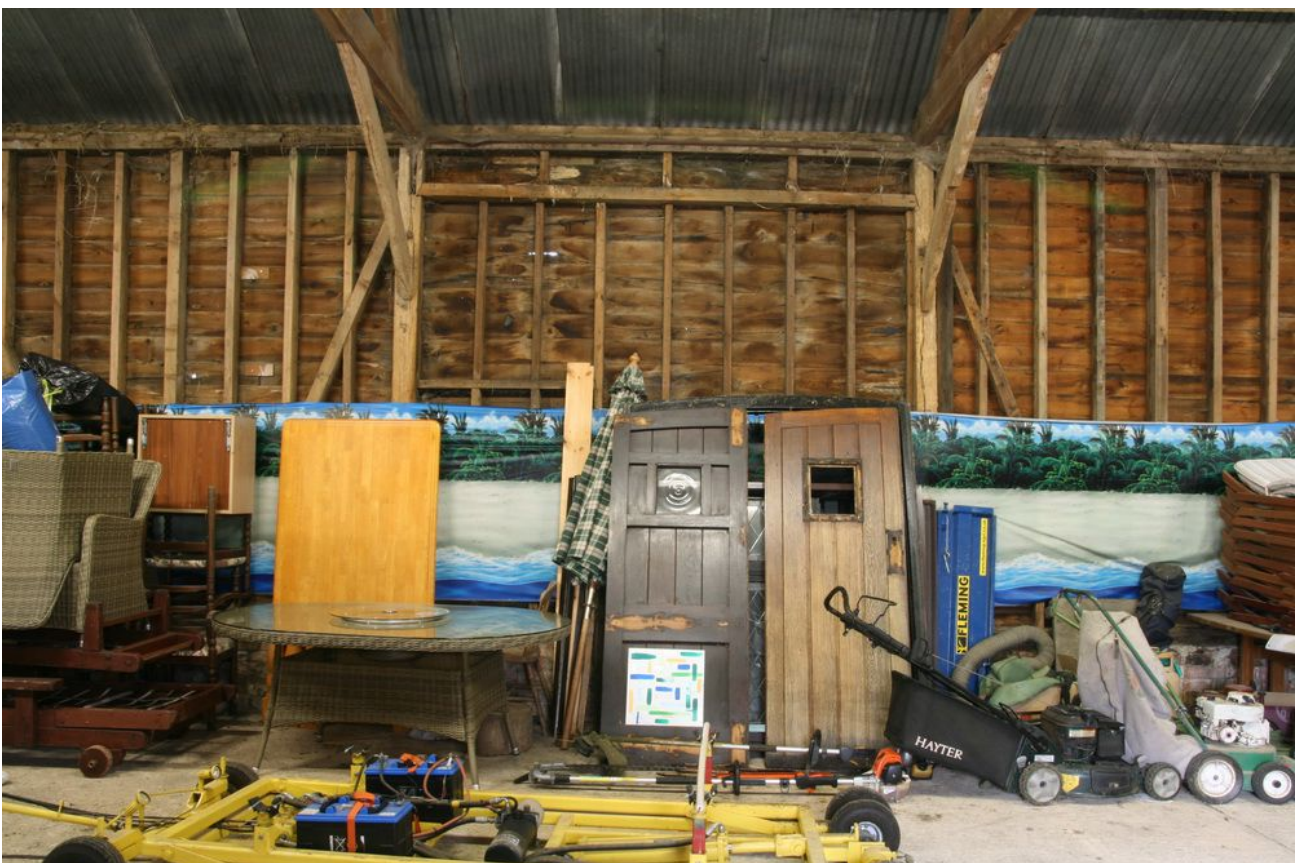


Plate 08 - Western (blocked) barn door opening, looking W

HN1564: Beauchamps Cottage, Wyddial



Plate 09 - Early framing in NE corner of barn, looking NE



Plate 10 - Bay 2-3, western brace, looking NW

HN1564: Beauchamps Cottage, Wyddial



Plate 11 - Exposed framing and blocked door in S elevation, looking S



Plate 12 - Fireplace, E ground floor, looking WNW

HN1564: Beauchamps Cottage, Wyddial



Plate 13 - Stair and kitchen access, E ground floor, looking ENE



Plate 14 - Chimney and alcove, W ground floor, looking NE

HN1564: Beauchamps Cottage, Wyddial



Plate 15 - Double chimney breast in W elevation, E 1st floor, looking WNW



Plate 16 - East elevation, W 1st floor, looking NE

HN1564: Beauchamps Cottage, Wyddial



Plate 17 - Fleur-de-Lys detail on backplate, W 1st floor fireplace

APPENDIX

DETERMINING EFFECT SIGNIFICANCE

Sensitivity of Receptors

The sensitivity of archaeological and built heritage receptors has been considered in the following terms, based on guidance published in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB).

Table 1: Receptor Sensitivity Descriptors

| Value | Archaeology | Built Heritage |
|------------|--|---|
| Very High | World Heritage Sites. Other sites of international importance. | World Heritage Sites. Other buildings of recognised international importance. |
| High | Scheduled Monuments (including proposed sites). Undesignated sites and monuments of schedulable quality and importance. | Scheduled Monuments with standing remains. Grade I and Grade II* Listed Buildings. Other listed buildings that can be shown to have exceptional qualities in their fabric or historical associations not adequately reflected in the listing grade. Conservation Areas containing very important buildings. Undesignated structures of clear national importance. |
| Medium | Designated or undesignated assets that contribute to regional research objectives. | Grade II Listed Buildings. Unlisted buildings that can be shown to have exceptional qualities in their historic fabric or historical associations. Conservation Areas containing buildings that contribute significantly to its historic character. |
| Low | Undesignated sites of local importance. Assets compromised by poor preservation and/or poor survival of contextual associations. Assets of limited value, but with potential to contribute to local research objectives. | 'Locally Listed' buildings. |
| Negligible | Assets with very little or no surviving archaeological interest. | Buildings of no architectural or historical merit. Buildings of an intrusive character. |
| Unknown | The importance of the resource has not been ascertained. | Buildings with some hidden (i.e. inaccessible) potential for historic significance. |

Table 2: Magnitude of Impact Descriptors

| Magnitude of Impact | Archaeology | Built Heritage |
|---------------------|--|---|
| Major | Change to most or all key archaeological materials, such that the resource is totally altered. Comprehensive changes to setting. | Change to key historic building elements, such that the resource is totally altered. Comprehensive changes to the setting. |
| Moderate | Changes to many key archaeological materials, such that the resource is clearly modified. Considerable changes to setting that affect the character of the asset. | Change to many key historic building elements, such that the resource is significantly modified. Changes to the setting of an historic building, such that it is significantly modified. |
| Minor | Changes to key archaeological materials, such that the asset is slightly altered. | Change to key historic building elements, such that the asset is slightly different. Change to setting of an historic building, such that it is noticeably changed. |
| Negligible | Very minor changes to archaeological materials, or setting. | Slight changes to historic building's elements or setting that hardly affect it. |
| No change | No change. | No change to fabric or setting. |

Table 3: Significance of Effect Measures

| Value of the Receptor | Magnitude of Effect | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------|
| | Major | Moderate | Minor | None |
| High (National) | Major | Major /Moderate | Moderate | Negligible |
| Medium (Regional) | Major /Moderate | Moderate | Moderate/Minor | Negligible |
| Low (Local) | Moderate | Moderate/Minor | Minor | Negligible |
| Negligible | Negligible | Negligible | Negligible | Negligible |
| Unknown | Unknown | Unknown | Unknown | Unknown |